

REMARKS

The Final Office Action dated November 17, 2008 contained a final rejection of claims 1-25. The Applicants have amended claims 1, 7, 14, 19 and 23. Claims 1-25 are in the case. Please consider the present amendment with the attached Request for Continued Examination (RCE) under 37 C.F.R. § 1.114. This amendment is in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.114. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Office Action rejected claims 1-11 and 14-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Tresser et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,804,373 (Tresser).

The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and submit that Tresser does not disclose all of the features of the independent claims, as amended.

Specifically, the Applicants' independent claims now include that the halftoning process creates a multi-plane bitmap defined by specific placement and size of different colored ink drops and mathematically combining the multi-plane bitmap to create the authentication key. Support for these amendments can be found throughout the specification, and in particular, at least in paragraphs [0010], [0012] and [0025] of the Applicants' U.S. Patent Publication No. 2005/0166052 A1.

Although Tresser discloses a halftoning process, an image (I) undergoes a particular process before being submitted to any halftoning process. In particular, a new image (I') is computed out of the image (I) by covering the image (I) with a grid of size H-by-V, and then averaging the grey levels on the little rectangles defined by the grid. (see col. 7, lines 7-9 of Tresser) Next, a halftoned version (M) of the new image (I') is computed using some preferred halftoning engine. (see col. 7, lines 12-15 or Tresser) As such, a grey level averaging process is performed on the image before the halftoning process is performed.

In contrast, the Applicants' independent claims include the submission of an initial digital file without intervening transformation directly to a predetermined halftone process and wherein the halftoning process creates a multi-plane bitmap defined by specific placement and size of different colored ink drops and wherein the mathematical process includes mathematically combining the multi-plane bitmap to

create the authentication key. Clearly, Tresser does not disclose the above newly added features as specifically claimed. Instead, Tresser simply disclose that once the halftoned version (M) of the image is produced, it is cut into a plurality of pieces, wherein some of the pieces may be processed in an image compression engine, while others of the pieces may be processed by a digital signature scheme, such as the RSA scheme (see col. 9, lines 8-19 of Tresser), unlike the Applicants' independent claims.

Consequently, because Tresser does not disclose all of the features of the Applicants' independent claims, Tresser cannot anticipate the claims.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action rejected claims 12 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Tresser in view of Linsker et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,598,473 (Linsker). The Office Action rejected claims 19, 22 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Tresser in view of Brundage et al., U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0181671 (Brundage). The Office Action rejected claims 20, 21, 24 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Tresser in view of Brundage and further in view of Linsker.

The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and submit that Tresser, alone or in combination with Linsker and/or Brundage, do not disclose all of the features of the independent claims, as amended.

Specifically, as discussed above, Tresser does not disclose the above newly claimed features. In addition, Brundage merely disclose using digital watermarking in authenticating documents (see Abstract and Summary of Brundage) while Linsker simply discloses using digital signatures in authenticating documents (see Abstract and Summary of Linsker). Hence, unquestionably, when Tresser is combined with Linsker and/or Brundage, any combination of these references still does not disclose the Applicants' newly claimed features as discussed above.

With regard to the dependent claims, since they depend from the above-argued respective independent claims, they are therefore patentable on the same basis. (MPEP § 2143.03). As such, withdrawal of the obviousness rejection of the claims is respectfully requested.

Thus, it is respectfully requested that all of the claims be allowed based on the amendments and arguments. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to

withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. Additionally, in an effort to further the prosecution of the subject application, the Applicant kindly requests the Examiner to telephone the Applicant's attorney at (818) 885-1575. Please note that all mail correspondence should continue to be directed to:

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